



STATE REPRESENTATIVE
STEVE DOYLE

WISCONSIN STATE ASSEMBLY

94th DISTRICT

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Rep. Doyle Angered by Joint Finance Action on Roadwork

Rep. Steve Doyle (D-Onalaska) expressed concern today over an item slipped into the State Budget by the Joint Finance Committee. The provision would require counties to hire outside private contractors to do roadwork instead of the county workers. "This is going to cost taxpayers more money, and potentially cost local workers their jobs," said Doyle.

"Local governments can do these jobs more effectively and cost efficiently than a profit driven private company. Taking away local control is certainly not the best choice for the taxpayers of this area," according to Doyle. This JFC provision prohibits local governments from bidding on contracts over \$100,000 and requires that all project work over \$100,000 be bid to private contractors. This provision would eliminate much of the revenue that maintains County workforces during the summer, so that sufficient labor is available during the winter for plowing of all State, County and Federal roadways.

The action goes further to prevent local municipalities from doing any public works projects in cooperation with another local government, thereby eliminating the most cost effective sharing of equipment and labor among local governments. When municipalities contract with each other, the payment helps to fund equipment replacement and sharing of expertise.

Two examples:

- Vernon County owns a road painting machine that contracts with at least three other Counties (including La Crosse). Under the provision, revenue for maintenance and replacement to Vernon County is reduced and each County would have to buy its own painting machine.
- La Crosse County owns a Chip Spreader, which is offered by contract to at least three other counties and cities in the area. Under the provision, revenue for maintenance and replacement of the Chip Spreader is reduced and each municipality would have to buy its own machine or find a private contractor to do the work.

In both cases, the private sector has been unwilling to cost effectively provide this service.

"I am hopeful the Joint Finance Committee will revisit this issue and reverse their action on this ill-conceived proposal," Doyle said. "We need to allow local governments the flexibility to save taxpayer dollars through cooperation and collaboration".

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